



UN/SA COLLECTION

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE  
14th meeting  
held on  
Friday, 26 October 1979  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. EL-CHOUFI (Syrian Arab Republic)

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31 October 1979

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY IN CONNEXION WITH THE DEATH OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
OF SWAZILAND

1. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the members of the Committee, extended to the delegation, Government and people of Swaziland sincere condolences on the death of their Prime Minister, Major-General Mphevu Dlamini.

AGENDA ITEM 50: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued) (A/34/13, A/34/480, A/34/517, A/34/518, A/34/549, A/34/567; A/SPC/34/L.3-L.9)

2. Mr. RYDBECK (Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) said that he wished to make a few comments on the general debate which had now concluded on the item under consideration.

3. As he had observed in his introductory statement, the root of all of UNRWA's problems lay in the precarious state of its finances. The Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA had expressed the opinion that prudent management of UNRWA's finances should be continued in order to avoid a sudden breakdown of its services. He intended to follow that course. The Working Group had also indicated that it saw no alternative to his personally continuing to devote time and effort to fund-raising. He would, of course, do everything he could to persuade Governments and private organizations to respond generously to UNRWA's needs, but in the final analysis contributions to UNRWA were voluntary. He could do no more than point to the Agency's financial needs and to the probable social, economic and political consequences if it collapsed for lack of income.

4. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 reiterated the request that the Headquarters of the Agency be relocated within the area of operations as soon as practicable. He was ready to consult with any host Government on the practicality of setting up the Headquarters in its capital, but, while he agreed entirely that the Headquarters should when conditions permitted be reunited in Beirut or another capital of a host Government, he wished to point out that, as far as practicality was concerned, UNRWA Headquarters now functioned more efficiently, despite its division between Vienna and Amman, than it had been able to do for some years. In that connexion, he deeply appreciated the generous assistance received from the Government of Austria in the form of rent-free office accommodation between July 1978 and September 1979.

5. In his introductory statement he had referred to strains in relations between the Agency's administration and its locally recruited staff, numbering about 16,500, caused principally by the Agency's inability to meet increases in the cost of living. He was pleased to report that a meeting between staff and administration begun in Amman on 17 October had culminated in a new memorandum of understanding agreed by both parties. He looked forward therefore to a period of good relations with the UNRWA staff.

6. The representative of Israel had challenged the figures for registered Palestine refugees as shown in the annual report, giving the maximum possible number of refugees in 1948 as less than 600,000, whereas the figure in table 1 of the report for 1950, the first year of UNRWA's operations, was 960,000, including refugees receiving relief in Israel. He wished to point out that when UNRWA had started its work, it had taken over responsibility from private charitable organizations which had given it their records. It had always admitted that the statistics for Palestine refugees were not wholly accurate, and the representative of Israel was aware of that.

7. It was true that there had been a very large increase in the number of registered refugees, from 960,000 in 1950 to 1.8 million in 1979. That, of course, had been brought about by natural increase and not by the addition of adults. What that meant in practical terms was that the average size of the refugee family registered with UNRWA was over seven persons, and as a result the Agency's school system was bursting at the seams. UNRWA was not, of course, complacent about its rolls of registered and eligible refugees and did its best to keep them up to date. Nearly 1 million refugees had been removed from the ration rolls since 1950, but nearly 1.5 million had been added, almost all because of births. Rectification of the rolls was a continuing process and was carried out not only on the basis of death or absence from the area of operations but also on grounds of income. Thus, in the two years up to June 1979, a total of 12,992 refugees who had previously been receiving services had been ruled ineligible because of improved income.

8. The representative of Israel had referred to paragraph 16 of the report, which described the basic ration as a "modest economic subvention" for the less well-off refugees. Since that phrase had first been coined in 1965, the flour component of the basic ration had fallen by more than half, and it was now less than 5 kilograms a month. There were also 561,000 persons, the children of refugees, who were potentially eligible but unable to draw rations because of the ration ceiling enforced in Jordan since 1953 and elsewhere since 1963.

9. The Agency intended to concentrate its available resources on the relief and welfare programme and the poorest section of the refugee community. Since 1978 in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, the very poor had been able to apply for the full 10 kilograms of flour per month, which was issued after investigation of income. As of 30 June 1979, 19,000 persons were receiving full rations on that account. UNRWA had insufficient funds to buy food commodities for the rations and now distributed only what Governments and the EEC gave it in kind. In order to maintain that help, it would, if necessary, reduce the basic ration to other recipients still further.

10. Despite its special efforts to relieve the condition of the destitute and the very poor, however, the Agency's work should not be seen as being limited to that group of refugees alone. On behalf of the international community, UNRWA provided the Palestine refugees with services in the fields of education, health and welfare which were normally rendered by Governments to their populations. It had done so for many years, and any failure to continue to do so because of a lack of resources would have a most disturbing effect not only on the refugees themselves but on stability in the area.

11. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan) said that he wished to correct certain distorted figures that had been given by the Ambassador of Israel in connexion with the dimensions of the catastrophe of the Palestine refugees. Israel had uprooted all but 150,000 out of a total of 1.3 million Palestinian Arabs, who had constituted two thirds of the lawful inhabitants of Palestine under the Mandate. Instead of expressing remorse and readiness to make amends by permitting those innocent victims to return to their homeland, the Ambassador of Israel had juggled the numbers and reduced the Palestine refugee population to a mere 470,000. According to Israeli census figures, only 160,000 Palestinian Arabs had remained in the substantially expanded Israel of 1949-1950, and even that figure had only been reached as a result of Israel's annexation of the Arab Triangle and Umm Al Rashrash, subsequently renamed Eilat, after Jordan had signed the Armistice Agreement in 1949. When the United Nations General Assembly had recommended partition, there had been - according to official figures - 495,000 Palestinian Arabs and 515,000 Jews in the areas earmarked for the establishment of the Jewish State as against a mere 15,000 Jews in the areas earmarked for the Palestinian Arab State.

12. Many of the refugees had fled to the old sector of Jerusalem, the West and East Banks of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip, Syria and Lebanon in search of temporary accommodation and employment. In view of the considerable mobility of the refugees the various censuses had proved problematic and some had taken the form of a witch-hunt in which even United States congressional delegations had taken part, with the Palestinians subjected to constant harassment.

13. During the first two decades of UNRWA's existence, the Agency's annual budget had increased only from \$25 million to \$40 million until the inflation of the 1970s and the natural increase in the refugee population had pushed the figure to \$180 million. Since the cost of commodities and services had skyrocketed at the same time as the increase in the number of refugees, assistance in food and services had dropped steadily, in real terms, from the five cents a day originally envisaged for each refugee. An arbitrary ceiling of 800,000 had also been placed on the total number of recipients even though the number of registered and eligible refugees was over 1.8 million. However, since the Ambassador of Israel had questioned the accuracy of the British Mandatory Census of 1947, which had been carefully conducted, it was hardly surprising that he should have questioned the accuracy of UNRWA's figures.

14. Mr. DORON (Israel), speaking on a point of order, said that the representative of Jordan had deliberately misquoted him on three points. He had never claimed that there had been only 470,000 Palestinians in 1948; he had said that there had been nearly 600,000 refugees but had added that that number should be reduced by 20 per cent, giving a total of 470,000, for reasons which he had stated. Of course, course, the total number of Palestinians had been far greater.

15. He had not questioned the British Mandatory Census; he had simply stated that there were those who would like to question it. He had in fact said that he accepted the British census figures. The representative of Jordan should look at the record.

16. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan) said he wished to repeat that the juggling of figures by the Ambassador of Israel did not mean that the refugees had ceased to exist. The

(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

160,000 Palestinians who, according to the Israeli census of 1949-1950, remained in the expanded Israel currently numbered at least half a million after three decades, while the total number of Palestinian Arabs, including registered refugees, indigenous inhabitants and others scattered throughout the world, was close to 4 million. Because of Israel's total insensitivity to the plight of the Palestinians, not a single refugee had been repatriated to his homeland. As the host country to numerous refugees, Jordan was truly sympathetic to the plight of the hungry refugees of Cambodia and regarded the reference made by the Ambassador of Israel to the "much sought-after privileged status of a refugee living at the expense of the world community" as an insult to human rights and dignity. The world community had repeatedly decreed that the Palestine refugees should be enabled to return to their homes, only to be told by the Israeli Ambassador that only 50,000 out of hundreds of thousands of displaced refugees had been allowed to return under what he termed the reunion of families. Did the other displaced persons not also have families?

17. The Ambassador of Israel had boasted that Jewish refugees from Arab countries, whom the Jewish Agency had actually induced to leave their homelands, had been integrated without the assistance of UNRWA. They had, however, hardly been in need of UNRWA aid since Israel had forcibly acquired the fully furnished homes of the Palestine refugees and had, moreover, received billions of dollars from various countries for the purpose of resettling Jewish refugees.

18. The reason why the Palestinians were still refugees after three decades was not that the Arab States wished to use them as a political instrument of pressure but rather that resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, which had stipulated their repatriation, had remained a dead letter. The Arab States derived no benefit from the perpetuation of a situation that had embroiled them in four wars, cost them tens of billions of dollars and portended even greater risks to their security, stability, development, and progress. Indeed, the Arab States, with the participation of Palestinians, and Israel had initialled the Lausanne Protocol on 12 May 1949, but the Israelis had subsequently refused to ratify it because their expansionist plans had not yet been fulfilled; that was the reason for the prolongation of the Palestine refugees' plight.

19. Contrary to Israeli assertions, the Arab States had provided considerable assistance to the Palestine refugees. Jordan had contributed \$36,791,755 the previous year in addition to shouldering responsibility for those displaced in 1967 and providing employment and other services. Over the past 12 years, \$1.4 billion had been contributed to the occupied West Bank. The other Arab countries had also provided the Palestinians with employment and had made direct contributions to the refugees. Direct payments had not been made to UNRWA in deference to the wishes of the Palestinian people, who believed that the Governments responsible for their displacement should make amends by providing temporary assistance and implementing the United Nations resolutions concerning the Palestinians' right to return to their homeland.

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(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

20. In order to help to stabilize the troubled world economy, several Arab countries were selling petroleum at \$18 a barrel while the official market price was \$25. Instead of gaining recognition of that sacrifice, they were being maligned by the Zionist-controlled media at the same time that Israel was miling the United States taxpayer of several billion dollars a year, either directly or through tax-exempt donations. Despite Israel's wishes, the Arab countries refused to resettle the Palestinian people in countries other than their natural homeland. The Palestinians did not enjoy living on the meagre assistance of the international community, and, in fact, almost 2.5 million out of 4 million had begun life afresh in exile, improved their condition through hard work and without assistance, and achieved one of the highest per capita rates of higher education. However, there were still more than 1 million Palestine refugees, mostly children, the orphaned and the aged, who had no means of sustaining themselves in exile and were dependent on UNRWA's assistance. If the international community failed in its moral obligation to assist them, they would still survive but the world would bear the consequences of a desperate people living with a deep feeling of injustice.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee now wished to proceed to the vote on draft resolutions A/SPC/34/L.3-9.

22. It was so decided.

23. At the request of the representative of Israel, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Israel.

24. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 was adopted by 116 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

25. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.4 was adopted by consensus.

26. At the request of the representative of Israel, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.5.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Israel, United States of America.

27. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.5 was adopted by 117 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

28. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.6 was adopted without a vote.

29. At the request of the representative of Mexico, a separate vote was taken on paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7.

30. Paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 was adopted by 91 votes to 6, with 23 abstentions.

31. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 as a whole.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Australia, Canada, Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Guatemala, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

32. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 was adopted by 101 votes to 4, with 18 abstentions.

33. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,



Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Barbados, Canada, Guatemala, Ivory Coast, United States of America.

34. Draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8 was adopted by 117 votes to 1, with 5 abstentions.

35. Mrs. HEANEY (Ireland), speaking in explanation of vote on behalf of the nine member States of the European Community, said that those States had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 and in the separate vote taken on paragraph 2 of that resolution because, although they recognized the right of all the displaced inhabitants to return to their homes or former places of residence in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, the wording of paragraph 1 might in practice preclude negotiated arrangements for their return. Moreover, the States in question did not feel that paragraph 2 was applicable to the negotiations currently under way and they were concerned about its ambiguity.

36. With regard to draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8, although the nine States had voted in favour of that resolution they thought that certain parts of the text were ambiguous. For example, in their opinion the fourth preambular paragraph should in no way imply an objection to the refugees' freedom to choose new housing and should not conflict with their right of return within the framework of a comprehensive negotiated settlement. The nine States had also noted that the references in paragraph 1 to the removal of refugees and destruction of their shelters were not entirely consistent with paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Secretary-General's report (A/34/517).

37. Mr. AKRIBI (Ivory Coast) said that the question of the Palestine refugees had become so politicized that the Committee had lost sight of the real problem, namely, the assistance which the international community must grant if the Palestinian people were to survive. Although the international community had agreed on the need to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people, it must not forget what lay behind the current movement of refugees and must therefore try to find a global, lasting solution to the Middle East crisis, thus solving the problem of the Palestine refugees once and for all.

38. Some of the resolutions on which the Committee had voted had been drafted in such a tendentious manner as to impede their implementation and delay the positive results expected by the Committee. That was especially true of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8, and his delegation had accordingly abstained in the vote on that resolution.

39. Mr. ROSENTHAL (United States of America) explained that, although his delegation had supported draft resolutions A/SPC/34/L.3, A/SPC/34/L.4 and A/SPC/34/L.6, it had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.5 because of the way in which it was worded. However, his Government would continue to

(Mr. Rosenthal, United States)

support, through UNRWA and through voluntary agencies, the worthy objective of enabling the largest possible number of students to obtain higher education.

39a. His delegation had also abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8 because the Secretary-General's report (A/34/517) clearly stated that there had been no punitive demolition of refugees' shelters in the past year and that resolution was therefore inappropriate. Moreover, an attempt was made in the fourth preambular paragraph to link, in a very unclear manner, the efforts to resettle refugees in the Gaza Strip with the right of return as set forth in General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

40. His delegation had voted against draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 because, in its opinion, that resolution was needlessly polemical and distracted the Committee from the task of improving UNRWA's assistance to the Palestine refugees.

41. Mr. DORON (Israel) explained that his delegation had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 because the interpretation of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) contained in it was not consistent with Israel's ongoing interpretation of that resolution. There had been many developments since the latter's adoption - in particular the Camp David accords - and the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. He pointed out that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) provided for a negotiated solution to the problem and made no mention of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

42. His delegation had also abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.5 for the reasons described in the statement he had made at the previous meeting. During the 19 years of Jordanian rule over the West Bank, the Palestinians had been refused access to higher education, which was permitted by his Government. That fact had been reflected in the remark by the representative of Jordan at the present meeting that the Palestinians were achieving higher standards of education despite the fact that they were living in exile.

43. His delegation had voted against draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 because, in its opinion, the draft was unrealistic and constituted Arab propaganda directed against Israel and aimed at subverting the peace process, as was clearly evident in paragraph 2.

44. It had also voted against draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8 because the reference to General Assembly resolution 194 (III) was irrelevant and was designed to mislead the Committee and distort the facts. The Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip were eager to move to decent, less crowded housing, and no one could demand that Israel should cease to provide decent accommodations for them. Israel would continue to direct its efforts towards the real needs of the refugees and would not use those needs, as some delegations did, for political purposes.

45. Mr. NEVES (Portugal) explained that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 because it supported the right of the Palestine refugees displaced since 1967 to return to their homes. However, the wording of paragraphs 1 and 2 could prejudice the outcome of the current negotiations, and his delegation had therefore abstained in the separate vote on paragraph 2.

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46. Mr. AL-ALI (Iraq) drew attention to the fact that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 because that resolution, and in particular paragraph 1, reaffirmed the right of the Palestine refugees to return to their homes and was entirely consistent with Iraq's position on the question.

47. Mr. GOMEZ ROBLEDO (Mexico) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 even though the matter dealt with in paragraph 4 fell within the competence of the Secretary-General, not the General Assembly.

48. It had voted in favour of all the other draft resolutions with the exception of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 because of its profound sympathy for the Palestine refugees and its support for their inalienable right to self-determination.

49. It had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 as a whole, and had requested a separate vote on paragraph 2, because, although it supported the principle on which that resolution was based, it thought that it was dangerous to extend the provisions of the Vienna Conventions to other situations.

50. Mr. AL-SAYEGH (United Arab Emirates) said that his delegation had voted in favour of resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 for reasons which should be clear and also because it reaffirmed the right of the refugees to be repatriated or compensated in accordance with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III). With regard to paragraph 5 of the resolution, it was a matter for grave concern that the Conciliation Commission had not been able to discharge its duty to find a means of achieving progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), and the Committee could not be satisfied that sufficient efforts had been made in that direction. The report of the Conciliation Commission was merely a repetition of earlier reports and showed that the Commission had not taken its mission seriously enough. Consideration should be given in 1980 to reorganizing the Commission or changing its membership with a view to fuller participation by Member States.

51. Mr. DÜLLING (Sweden) said that, with regard to resolution A/SPC/34/L.7, his delegation had consistently upheld the right of refugees displaced since 1967 to return to their homeland or former place of residence and had voted at previous General Assemblies in favour of resolutions which expressed that right. However, resolution 33/112 F had introduced ambiguities which could be interpreted to mean that all discussions or negotiations on the subject of repatriation were inadmissible. His delegation had therefore abstained in the vote on that resolution. Similar ambiguities in paragraphs 1 and 2 of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 further obscured, in the view of his delegation, the true purpose of the draft. His delegation had therefore abstained in the separate vote on paragraph 2. That vote did not, however, detract from his delegation's support of the right of the refugees to return. His delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 and wished to emphasize that the fourth preambular paragraph of the draft should not be taken to mean that the Palestinians could be obliged to stay in the camps, possibly against their will, in order to retain the right to return. Voluntary settlement outside the camps should not prejudice that right, and he had therefore welcomed the remarks of the Observer for the PLO in that respect. With regard to paragraph 1 of the draft, he wished to point out that the Commissioner-General's report had not recounted any instances of forcible removal by Israel of refugees in the Gaza Strip, and he assumed that none would take place in future.

52. Mr. SCHMID (Austria) said that he could assure the Commissioner-General of the continued commitment of Austria to the noble aims of the Agency. A tangible expression of that commitment was to be found not only in the affirmative vote of his delegation on all but one of the resolutions but also in Austria's direct financial contributions to the budget of the Agency and in its support of the specialized agencies and private organizations which assisted the Agency's work. Because of its strong relationship with all the peoples of the Middle East and its traditional commitment to alleviating the plight of refugees, his Government had been happy to offer shelter to the headquarters of the Agency following the tragic events in Lebanon; the Austrian Government and the local authorities in Vienna would continue to provide facilities for the Agency's functions as long as they were needed.

53. Miss RICO (Spain) said that her delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7 because her Government supported the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of those displaced since 1967 to return to their homes. Her delegation's vote did not, however, mean that Spain prejudged the result of the negotiations now in progress, and she hoped that those who had courageously launched those negotiations understood that no lasting peace could be achieved unless it was based on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

54. Mr. KOLBY (Norway) said that his delegation had been unable to support draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.7. His country supported the right of those displaced since 1967 to return to their homeland, but the draft resolution was worded in a way which he felt could hamper the search for a negotiated solution. His delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.8 but wished to emphasize that the draft should be construed as opposing the resettlement by force of the refugees and the destruction of their shelters and not as restricting the right of the refugees freely to choose their place of residence.

55. Mr. MANSOURI (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation commended the efforts of the Commissioner-General as recorded in the report (A/34/13) and in his statement to the Committee and wished him every success in the humanitarian task of the Agency. His delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolutions just adopted by the Committee. The vote in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 did not mean that his delegation accepted the idea of the reintegration of refugees contained in paragraph 1; rather, he understood the paragraph to mean that steps should be taken for the repatriation of the refugees and for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions upholding the right of self-determination.

56. The CHAIRMAN said that the representatives of Burundi and Nigeria had been absent during the votes on draft resolutions A/SPC/34/L.3 and A/SPC/34/L.5 but wished it to be known that they would have voted in favour of those drafts. The representative of the Dominican Republic, who had been absent during the votes on draft resolutions A/SPC/34/L.3 and A/SPC/34/L.5, would have voted in favour of those drafts.

57. Mr. PULI (Ghana) said that his delegation had been absent during the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/34/L.3 but if present would, as in the past, have voted in favour of the draft.

58. Mr. MUSLIMAH (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in no way abrogated the terms of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) with regard to the right of the Palestinians to repatriation or compensation. The Security Council resolution merely referred to a just solution of the Palestinian problem, and for his delegation that implied the right of return for the refugees.

59. The representative of Israel had said that Jordan had not permitted the establishment of universities on the West Bank. In fact, the three universities at Nablus, Bethlehem and Birzeit had previously existed for some 50 years in the form of colleges which had not yet attained university status. No university could be created overnight. The Jordanian Government was in no way opposed to the establishment of universities but had been trying to consolidate the institutions which already existed. Since the occupation of the West Bank by Israel, harassment had been taking place in the three universities at Israel's instigation, as could be seen from the strikes which had occurred and the fact that professors had been prevented from lecturing.

60. With regard to the progress achieved by the Palestinians, it remained true that there were still over a million distressed refugees, mainly consisting of elderly people, orphans and children. Their survival would be placed in jeopardy if UNRWA's operations collapsed, and the United Nations had a duty not to abandon them.

61. Mr. DORON (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Jordan was trying to distort everything he had said. During the 19 years that Jordan had ruled the West Bank, the colleges there had repeatedly applied for university status but had been refused. Only Israel had allowed them to become universities, though fully aware that they would become centres for propaganda and incitement against Israel. Universities were frequently centres of unrest in Europe, the United States and Latin America, but Israel's policy had been to enable them to function. The measures it had been forced to take had been minimal, and all the West Bank institutions of higher education were now open.

62. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that during his Government service he had never seen any application from any of the three colleges to become universities. There had been no decision by the Government of Jordan to prevent them from obtaining university status, but a certain process of development was required before that standard could be achieved. In fact, the university of Nablus was still seeking to have its degrees accepted abroad.

63. Mr. DORON (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said he was sure that the representative of Jordan would agree that the fact that he had not seen something did not prove that it did not exist.

64. Mr. TERZI (Observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization) said that the vital issue was the destiny of nearly 4 million people, although only 1.8 million of them were receiving Agency support. The fate of the refugees was closely connected with the prospects for peace. It was of great significance that

(Mr. Terzi, Observer, PLO)

General Assembly resolution 194 (III) had been reaffirmed at every single General Assembly, including the present one. The refugees' right of return had somehow been omitted from the Camp David accords and replaced by what were called "applications for admission", but that inalienable right had again been recognized by the Committee and would, he hoped, be again endorsed by the Assembly. Resolution 194 (III) had antedated the resolution admitting Israel as a Member of the United Nations, and he hoped that delegates would look into the precondition laid down for Israel's admission.

65. With regard to education, Israel was pursuing a racist policy of segregating Arab schools and was making no attempt at integrating schools in the occupied territories. Its so-called "positive segregation" was tantamount to apartheid.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.